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## BOOK REVIEWS.

*A Student's History of English Literature.* By W. E. SIMONDS. Boston: Houghton, Mifflin & Co.

CERTAINLY progress has been made during the past few years in the publication of histories of English literature. At times we stand appalled before the number, which is increased almost monthly, and yet it is not difficult to select one now and then which is really worth while. Such I consider Professor William Edward Simonds's *A Student's History of English Literature*. This volume is a happy combination of the "practical text-book and a readable narrative."

The six chapters, covering four hundred and sixty pages, survey the various changes from the earliest Anglo-Saxon times to Swinburne, one of the last of the Victorians. It cannot be denied that the treatment is clear and sane, displaying the scholarly point of view and at the same time evading the pedantic. The style is decidedly interesting, and shows indeed that the author has read with profit from the masters of whom he treats with such sympathy. The plan of the book has evidently been to consider periods as represented by certain men, "to fix definitely the authors and tendencies which are of chief importance, and to give some insight into the movements of minor consequence." This proportion has been well observed.

Properly, it seems to us, Professor Simonds has given the essential literary and historical facts "indispensable even to an elementary knowledge of literary history." Thus chap. V has as subtitles: I, "The Augustan age of English Prose;" II, "The Poetry of Alexander Pope;" III, "The Rise of the English Novel;" IV, "Essayists of the Second Half;" V, "The Romantic Movement in English Poetry." If we may select any part of a book which deals with a great subject in a sympathetic way, we should choose that part of the fifth chapter dealing with the writers of Augustan age of English prose—Addison, Swift, Defoe, Johnson, and others. However, the nineteenth-century writers receive just attention. Especially delightful are the words on Lamb.

To teachers and pupils alike the suggestions closing each section will prove of value. Here are included the best editions, a short but well-selected bibliography, analysis of particular pieces with appropriate questions. The endeavor in these questions has been rather to make the reader do the thinking than to tell him everything. There are sixteen pages of such suggestions on Shakespeare, dealing with six of the principal plays, eight pages on Milton, ten pages on Scott, analyzing *Ivanhoe* as a sample novel.

The value of the history is enhanced by a map showing the places connected with literary history, a dozen or more facsimile and other illustrations, and an extensive index.

On the whole, the book is a perfectly sane and safe treatment in a thoroughly interesting manner of a theme which never grows old. "But the past is our heritage: what a heritage it is! what glorious minds these men possessed! what glorious souls! And these are forever our possession in our books."

WILL D. HOWE.

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